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REPORT

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE

BRADFORD-ON-AVON URBAN DISTRICT

FOR THE YEAR 1948

PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL BY

JEAN MURRAY, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health, and
M. M. DIXON, Cert. R.S.I.
of the Bradford-on-Avon Urban Sanitary Authority

MASSEY, TROWBRIDGE

Annual Report of Medical Officer

BRADFORD-ON-AVON URBAN DISTRICT

——— : : ———

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Area—2,005 acres.

Population—5,500 (estimated).

Number of Inhabited Houses—1,564.

Rateable Value—£25,127.

Sum represented by Penny Rate—£97 : 8 : 10d.

In presenting my Report for the year 1948, I regret that I was unfortunately absent from duty on account of illness for four months of the year.

During that time, my duties were ably carried out by Dr. J. Reynolds, Medical Officer for the neighbouring combined district of Westbury and Warminster, who very kindly deputised for me. My thanks are due to Dr. Reynolds for his assistance during the period.

In the circumstances, my Report for this year is inevitably somewhat attenuated.

A Surveyor-Sanitary Inspector was appointed in June, 1948 —Mr. M. M. Dixon.

Social Conditions

During this year, the District assumed some of the pre-war characteristics, and it might be said that the change from war-time conditions to peace conditions began to take effect, although rather slowly.

The year also saw the commencement of the National Health Service, and the transfer from the administration of the Wilts County Council to that Service of the Berryfield Maternity Hospital. The Bradford-on-Avon District Hospital, which has done admirable service for the District, was similarly transferred.

VITAL STATISTICS

	M.	F.	Total.
Live Births	48	57	... 105

	M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate	44	53 ...	97
Illegitimate	4	4 ...	8
Still Births	1	0 ...	1
Legitimate	1	0 ...	1
Illegitimate	0	0 ...	0
Deaths of Infants under 1 year	1	1 ...	2
Legitimate	1	1 ...	2
Illegitimate	0	0 ...	0
Deaths of Infants under 2 years			
From Diarrhoea and Enteritis	0	0 ...	0
Deaths (from All Causes) ...	28	25 ...	53

BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

	Compare.	
Live Birth Rate :— 16·1 per 1,000 population	England & Wales	17·9
Still Birth Rate :— 0·18 per 1,000 population	,, ,,	0·42
Death Rate Infants under 1 year :— 19·04 per 1,000 live births	,, ,,	34·0
Death Rate Infants under 2 years from Diarrhoea and Enteritis :— 0 per 1,000 live births	,, ,,	5·6
Death Rate :— 9·6 per 1,000 population	,, ,,	10·8

ANALYSIS OF DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES

	M.	F.	Total.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ...	0	0 ...	0
Cerebro-spinal Fever	0	0 ...	0
Scarlet Fever	0	0 ...	0
Whooping Cough	0	0 ...	0
Diphtheria	0	0 ...	0
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	4	0 ...	4

	M.	F.	Total.
Other Forms of Tuberculosis ...	0	0 ...	0
Syphilitic Diseases	1	0 ...	1
Influenza	0	0 ...	0
Measles	0	0 ...	0
Acute Polio-myelitis and Polio-encephalitis	0	0 ...	0
Acute Infective Encephalitis ...	0	0 ...	0
Cancer of Buceal Cavity : Oesophagus (M) ; Uterus (F)	0	0 ...	0
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	0	1 ...	1
Cancer of Breast	0	0 ...	0
Cancer all other sites	3	2 ...	5
Diabetes	0	0 ...	0
Intracranial Vascular Lesions ...	2	4 ...	6
Heart Disease	6	11 ...	17
Other Diseases of the Circulatory System	2	0 ...	2
Bronchitis	0	0 ...	0
Pneumonia	1	0 ...	1
Other Respiratory Diseases ...	1	0 ...	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	0	0 ...	0
Diarrhoea, under 2 years	0	0 ...	0
Appendicitis	1	0 ...	1
Other Digestive Diseases	0	0 ...	0
Nephritis	2	0 ...	2
Puerperal and Post Abortion Sepsis	0	0 ...	0
Other Maternal Causes	0	0 ...	0
Premature Birth	1	1 ...	2
Congenital Malprivations; Birth Injury and Infantile Diseases ...	0	1 ...	1
Suicide	1	0 ...	1
Road Traffic Accidents	0	0 ...	0
Other Violent Causes	0	2 ...	2
All Other Causes	3	3 ...	6
Total	28	25 ...	53

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

I. **Staff.** (i) One part-time Medical Officer (a full-time Public Health Officer who acts for 2 other districts, and is also an Assistant County Medical Officer).

(ii) One Sanitary Inspector who is also the Surveyor.

In June of this year we welcomed to the staff Mr. M. M. Dixon as Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor.

II. (a) **Laboratory Facilities**

Dr. Douglas Thornton, the County Pathologist, Salisbury General Infirmary; Messrs. Waterfall & O'Brien, Bristol.

N.B.—All swabs, etc., collected from the 5.30 p.m. 'bus at Salisbury. Other 'buses or trains met on receipt of a telephone message.

(b) **Ambulance Facilities**

During the year, the local Ambulance, which had been operated by the local division of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, was transferred to the Wilts County Council, as a result of the coming into force of the National Health Service Act. With that, the connection of the St. John's Brigade, and voluntary effort in connection with the operation of the Ambulance ceased, and the opportunity of paying tribute to the voluntary workers who operated the Ambulance since its inception must not be missed.

The Wilts County Council, upon assuming responsibility for the Ambulance Service, established an Ambulance Station in premises at Woolley Grange, with two ambulances and two sitting cars, together with sufficient staff to maintain a twenty-four hour service. The Ambulance Station, of course, serves an area wider than the Urban District.

(c) **Nursing in the Home**

There are two local District Nurses—one general, one midwife.

The County Council have tried to obtain "Home Helps" but with little success.

(d) **Treatment Centres and Clinics**

A Child Welfare Clinic is held in the Old Church House on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. I attend on the 1st Tuesday; the County full-time Health Visitor with the assistance of two local nurses attends both times.

National Assistance Act

The Council had to take action under Section 47 of this Act to secure proper attention for an elderly man living alone who was failing in health and was unable to give himself, or obtain from others, sufficient care. He was admitted to hospital at The Lodge, Semington, in December, 1948.

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Water Supply

The quality of the water supplied was satisfactory. The purity is ensured by pressure operated chlorinator run at the minimum throughout the year, and increased when necessary to keep the proportion at 1·5 per 1,000,000 in the reservoir, and 1·0 per 1,000,000 in the mains.

During the year, the Council proceeded with plans to commence the scheme for the improvement of pressure in the higher level areas, of which approval had been given by the Ministry.

It is a matter of regret that the Ministry were unable to approve the proposals of the Council in regard to the construction of an additional reservoir, as the need for additional storage capacity is urgent and apparent.

Analyses of Water

An analysis is included showing that the water was generally of a good quality, but the variation aforementioned (in 1947) continues : correction is carried out by increasing the strength of chlorination.

TYPICAL BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS

(1) **From Reservoir** Received 12/5/48.

1. **Bacteriological Count**
   Total colonies growing on agar at 37° C in 48 hours : 0 per 1 ml. of water.

2. **B. Coli Counts at 37° C in 48 hours and 44° C in 48 hours.**

Quantity of Water Tested	Acid and Gas from lactose									
	at 37° C					at 44° C				
Five tubes of 10 ml. water	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Five tubes of 1 ml. water	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

As result of calculation made from above :

(1) Number of Coli Aerogenes per 100 ml. growing at 37° C ... ... Nil

(2) Number of Faecal types of B. Coli per 100 ml. growing at 44° C ... ... Nil

OPINION :—

Bacteriological examination shows no evidences whatsoever of harmful pollution.

Type of Supply

I. **Rivers and Streams**

There has been no necessity for action to prevent pollution in the district.

II. (1) **Closet Accommodation**

A few houses on the outlying portion of the town only have other than water-closets.

(2) **Public Cleansing**

During the war, the Council decided to cancel the previous method of refuse disposal, and a modern refuse-lorry was obtained and the work carried out by the Council's employees.

III. **Sewage Disposal**

There has been no extension of the sewerage system, and the Sewage Works continued to function satisfactorily.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Notifications corrected and arranged for Sex and Age

Age Group	Scarlet Fever		Whooping Cough		Measles	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	0	1	0	0	1	2
1	0	0	0	0	3	6
3	0	0	0	0	6	5
5	0	1	0	0	14	10
10	0	1	0	0	1	0
15	0	0	0	1	0	0
25 and over	2	1	0	0	0	0
Age unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS ...	2	4	0	1	25	23

Age Group	Pneumonia		Erysipelas	
	M	F	M	F
0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0
15	0	1	0	0
45	0	0	1	0
65 and over	0	0	0	0
Age unknown	0	0	0	0
TOTALS ...	0	1	1	0

As in other years, the cases of Scarlet Fever were mild ones, several of which were nursed at home. The Measles cases occurred in the first 3 quarters of the year, stopping abruptly in the holiday period.

Diphtheria Immunisation

This continued to be carried out by the County Council, their special officer appointed for this work visiting the schools at intervals.

It is hoped that in future the number of children immunised will approximate much more to the number of children born. The most far-seeing parents do not wait to be informed about it, but ask for it: many of the others come forward after persuasion by the Nurse, but there are still some who prefer not to accept the offer to safeguard their children, and thus help to safeguard all other children.

HOUSING

The following work has been carried out by the Council :—

Permanent

(a) **"Churches'" Site.** During the year, the 20 houses included in the first contract were completed and occupied.

Work commenced on the erection of the remaining 22 houses to complete the site, two contracts being let, and some of the houses on the second contract being completed.

(b) **Priory Park Site.** It is the Council's intention to erect 42 houses on this site.

(c) **New Road Site.** The Council hope to erect 50 houses on the site.

(d) **Avonfield Site.** During the year, the development of this site was commenced, also the erection of 50 Unity type prefabricated houses.

As so many of the old houses in the town, already pre-war far below the housing standards, are suffering from a further 10 years' use, it is hoped that the new housing plans will go ahead. Bradford-on-Avon, being a picturesque historic town built on a steep rocky hillside, offers many difficulties in the improvement of existing houses. In certain cases in the past where persons have been willing to discount the difficulties in favour of the view and sunshine, quite desirable little houses for single people have been made from the old cottages : at the expense of those willing to live in them. The problem of making them conform to the standards laid down by the Housing Act "at reasonable expense" is almost insuperable. Many of them are built with at least 2 storeys against the rock, making through ventilation an impossibility. Lack of space inside the houses (some of them have 'cave-like' kitchens actually sunk into the rockface) and low ceilings make the conversion of them internally almost impossible.

JEAN MURRAY.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR

Nuisance Inspections

Number of Inspections made in 1948 ...	...	20
,, Informal Notices served ...	...	6
,, ,, ,, complied with	...	6
,, Statutory Notices served ...	...	0
,, ,, ,, complied with	...	0

Dairies and Cowsheds

Number of Cowsheds	...	...	...	25
,, ,, Inspections	...	...	...	10
,, ,, Dairies	...	...	...	26
,, ,, Inspections	...	...	...	12

Slaughterhouses

Number of Slaughterhouses (Registered)	...	2
,, ,, ,, (Licensed)	...	3

No slaughtering has occurred at the above during the year.

Number of Butchers' Shops	...	5
,, ,, ,, ,, Inspected	...	5

The Report covers the period July to December only.

Signed M. M. DIXON,
Sanitary Inspector.